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School Bus and Student Transportation Vehicle Driver Training Requirements**Sec. 14-276a-1. Definitions**

In Sections 14-276a-1 to 14-276a-15, inclusive, the following words shall have the following meanings:

(1) “Activity vehicle” means a student transportation vehicle used exclusively to transport students to school-related activities and shall not include any vehicle used to transport students to and from school.

(2) “Behind-the-wheel driving instruction” means driving a school bus or student transportation vehicle, and shall not include the use of driving simulators or other nonoperational instruction.

(3) “Carrier” means a carrier as defined in section 14-212 of the general statutes.

(4) “Approved instructor” means a person approved by the commissioner to provide safety training in accordance with Section 14-276a-9.

(5) “Commercial driver’s license” or “CDL” means a commercial driver’s license or CDL as defined in subdivision (10) of subsection (a) of section 14-1 of the general statutes.

(6) “Commercial motor vehicle” or “CMV” means a vehicle as defined in subdivision (11) of subsection (a) of section 14-1 of the general statutes.

(7) “Commissioner” means the commissioner of motor vehicles or his designee.

(8) “Department” means the department of motor vehicles.

(9) “Master instructor” means a person approved by the commissioner to provide instructor training, and who meets the requirements of Section 14-276a-11.

(10) “Passenger endorsement” means a “P” endorsement authorizing the holder of a commercial driver’s license (CDL) to operate a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) which carries passengers in accordance with sections 14-36a and 14-44d of the general statutes.

(11) “School bus” means a school bus as defined in subsection (a) of section 14-275 of the general statutes.

(12) “School endorsement” means an “S” endorsement authorizing the holder of a commercial driver’s license (CDL) to operate a school bus or student transportation vehicle, or authorizing the holder of Class 1 or Class 2 operator’s license to operate a student transportation vehicle, in accordance with the provisions of sections 14-36a and 14-44d of the general statutes.

(13) “Student transportation vehicle” means a student transportation vehicle as defined in subdivision (8) of section 14-212 of the general statutes.

(14) “V restriction” means a restriction which limits the holder of an operator’s license with a school endorsement to driving activity vehicles only.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-2. Requirements for applicants for a school endorsement

(a) No school endorsement for operation of a school bus or student transportation vehicle shall be issued or renewed until the applicant has submitted to the department a certificate of safety training, certifying that the applicant has successfully completed the training specified in Section 14-276a-3 or Section 14-276a-5. The certificate shall be signed by the applicant and by an approved instructor. This subsection shall not apply to an operator having a school endorsement accompanied by a “V” restriction.

(b) An applicant for a school endorsement to operate a school bus shall hold a valid commercial driver’s license with a passenger endorsement.

(c) An applicant for a school endorsement to operate a student transportation vehicle shall hold a valid operator's license.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-3. Preservice training

(a) The safety training required by Section 14-276a-2 for issuance of a school endorsement shall be administered or supervised by an approved instructor, and shall consist of at least ten (10) hours of training divided between behind-the-wheel driving instruction, and classroom instruction, according to the applicant's need as determined by the approved instructor, except that an applicant who meets the following requirements may receive no less than four (4) hours of training:

(1) The applicant holds a valid commercial driver's license; or

(2) The applicant for a school endorsement to operate a student transportation vehicle was appropriately licensed and employed as a student transportation vehicle driver for at least two (2) of the preceding four (4) years; or

(3) The applicant for a school endorsement to operate a school bus was appropriately licensed and employed as a school bus driver for at least two (2) of the preceding four (4) years.

(b) The safety training required by subsection (a) shall be given during the six (6) month period prior to application for a school endorsement.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-4. Content of preservice training subjects

The training required by Section 14-276a-3 shall include as a minimum the following:

(1) Training to obtain a commercial driver's license, if such license is required by law;

(2) Techniques for conducting a pre-trip safety inspection and completing a driver's vehicle inspection report (DVIR) as required by Section 14-275c-41 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies;

(3) Loading and unloading procedures;

(4) Procedures for crossing railroad tracks;

(5) Emergency procedures, accident management and evacuation, and instruction relative to the location, contents and use of the first aid kit in the school bus;

(6) Motor vehicle laws and regulations; and

(7) Use of passenger restraint systems and special equipment for students with mobility impairments if the driver intends to operate a vehicle so equipped.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-5. In-service training

The training required in Section 14-276a-2 for renewal of a school endorsement shall consist of a minimum of six (6) hours annually, and shall be administered or supervised by an approved instructor, or shall be provided in a safety training class approved by the commissioner. No more than three (3) hours of instruction in any one day shall count toward the total six (6) hours.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-6. Content of in-service training

The safety training required by Section 14-276a-5 shall include as a minimum the following subjects:

(1) Seasonal safety problems affecting driving, and loading and unloading procedures;

(2) Student management;

(3) Emergency procedures including first aid and universal precautions;

(4) Substance use and abuse;

(5) Communication skills;

(6) Activity trip procedures;

(7) Characteristics of students with disabilities; and

(8) Updates of laws, regulations and policies.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-7. Records of training

A record of the safety training provided in accordance with Sections 14-276a-3 and 14-276a-5 shall be retained for each driver in the driver qualification file, maintained as required by Section 14-275c-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-8. Audits by the department

(a) Any inspector of the department may conduct an audit of the driver qualification files required by Section 14-275c-46 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, including the training records required by Section 14-276a-7, at any reasonable time which does not conflict with the contractual obligations of the carrier, and for this purpose may enter the property of the carrier or other location where the records are maintained.

(b) As part of the audit, an inspector may conduct a road test to evaluate the proficiency of any driver whose qualification records are being inspected. Such test shall be conducted in the type of vehicle that the driver usually operates, at a reasonable time which does not interfere with the driver's contractual obligations.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-9. Instructor requirements

(a) No person shall be approved as an instructor of school bus operators unless such person:

(1) Holds a valid commercial driver's license, class B, pursuant to section 14-44d of the Connecticut General Statutes, with passenger and school endorsements;

(2) Has been employed as a school bus driver for three (3) consecutive years;

(3) Has had no more than two (2) moving violations as defined in Section 14-137a-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies within the previous two (2) years;

(4) Has been under the direct supervision of an approved instructor for at least one (1) year;

(5) Is recommended for approval by his employer and by the safety coordinator appointed in accordance with Section 14-275c-48 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, and such person's supervisor attests that such person is a proficient driver, has good oral and written communication skills, and will be utilized as an instructor;

(6) Successfully completes a forty (40) hour classroom program conducted by a master instructor.

(b) No person shall be approved as an instructor of student transportation vehicles (STV) operators unless such person:

(1) Holds a valid Connecticut operator's license, class 2, pursuant to section 14-36a of the Connecticut General Statutes, with a school endorsement ("S");

(2) Has been employed as a student transportation vehicle STV operator for three (3) consecutive years;

(3) Has had no more than two (2) moving violations as defined in Section 14-137a-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies within the previous two (2) years;

(4) Has been under the direct supervision of an approved instructor for at least one (1) year;

(5) Is recommended for approval by his employer, and such person's supervisor attests that such person is a proficient driver, possesses good oral and written communications skills, and that they will be utilized as an instructor and;

(6) Successfully completes a forty (40) hour instructor's program conducted by a master instructor.

(Effective March 27, 1997; amended December 10, 2003)

Sec. 14-276a-10. Maintaining status

To maintain status as an approved instructor of school bus and student transportation vehicle drivers, a person shall:

(1) Successfully complete an annual class conducted by a master instructor who is approved as provided in Section 14-276a-11;

(2) Maintain the appropriate license and endorsements; and

(3) Conduct at least one preservice or in-service training session including driver evaluations annually.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-11. Master instructors

(a) No person shall be approved as a master instructor unless he:

(1) Holds a valid commercial driver's license, class B, with passenger and school endorsements, and without air brake restriction, as provided in section 14-44d of the general statutes;

(2) Has been an active approved instructor for at least five (5) years;

(3) Has had no more than two (2) moving violations as defined in Section 14-137a-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies within the previous two (2) years;

(4) Is recommended for approval by his employer, and by a panel of department and industry representatives, as specified in Section 14-276a-13; and

(5) Successfully completes a forty (40) hour master instructor program administered under the authority of the commissioner.

(b) Each master instructor shall report to the commissioner his scheduled classes for instructors, including date, location and curriculum. An inspector for the department may audit any class conducted by a master instructor to verify the class content and to evaluate effectiveness.

(c) The department shall maintain a record of master instructors, including applications, driving histories, classes conducted, and annual activity sheets.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-12. Maintaining master instructor status

To maintain status as a master instructor, a person shall:

(1) Successfully complete an annual class administered by the commissioner;

(2) Conduct at least one class for approved instructors annually;

(3) Maintain the appropriate license and endorsements; and

(4) Successfully perform any additional duties reasonably imposed from time to time by the commissioner.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-13. Evaluation panel

There shall be assembled a panel composed of the commissioner or his representative, a department inspector responsible for testing school bus drivers, and two (2) representatives of the Connecticut School Transportation Association (COSTA) for the purpose of evaluating candidates for master instructor status. The duties of the panel shall include:

(1) Reviewing and evaluating the applications of candidates for master instructor status;

(2) Conducting interviews of such prospective candidates and determining eligibility on an individual basis;

(3) Approving the curriculum for the master instructor program; and

(4) Reviewing complaints, accidents, or moving violations which may affect the status of a master instructor.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-14. Sanctions

(a) Any driver who fails a road test conducted in accordance with subsection (b) of Section 14-276a-8 shall be disqualified from operating a school bus or student transportation vehicle until he passes a retest. Such retest shall be conducted within five (5) working days.

(b) Any master instructor or approved instructor who fails to maintain the qualifications required by Section 14-276a-10 or 14-276a-12 shall have his status as a master instructor or approved instructor withdrawn.

(Effective March 27, 1997)

Sec. 14-276a-15. Right to hearing

Any person who claims to be aggrieved by any decision or sanction imposed by the commissioner under the provisions of Sections 14-276a-1 to 14-276a-14, inclusive, may make a written request to the commissioner for a hearing. A hearing shall be scheduled within fourteen (14) days, excluding Sundays and state holidays. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions of sections 4-177 to 4-182, inclusive, of the general statutes, and Sections 14-137-36 to 14-137-39, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(Effective March 27, 1997)